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SOME ASPECTS OF A JUNIOR COLLEGE

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What is a junior college? At least three types of institutions have been called junior colleges by one or another writer. First, the freshman and sophomore years of the ordinary college course are designated by many universities as the junior college. Secondly, certain minor colleges in some of the states, notably Missouri, have found themselves unable to cope with the increasing outlay necessary to meet the requirements set by standardizing associations and state legislatures for institutions offering a complete college or university course. Hence, many of these institutions have arranged to give only two years of work and of such a nature as to articulate well with the upper two years of regular college courses. Such institutions are called junior colleges. Thirdly, in an increasing number of communities there is a demand for post-graduate work in high school or for an extension of the high school to include the first or first and second years of the college. The most common expansion includes both the first and second years. This extension of high school, or this adding of two years to the usual four years of high-school work, comprises the junior college as discussed throughout this article.

The junior college of this type probably first originated in definite form at Joliet, Illinois, under Principal J. Stanley Brown of the Township High School. It has since spread to a number of states but has received its highest development in California. In California, the junior college has a definite legal standing and receives state aid directly according to law. In Minnesota, a number of junior colleges have been organized as integral parts of public-school systems. Rochester, Faribault, Jackson, Cloquet, Eveleth, and Hibbing have all attempted the organization of such an institution. In this state, there is no legal recognition of the junior college as an institution, but the school revenue laws are of such a nature as to make it possible for a community to determine upon its own

school expenditures above those necessary to meet certain minimum requirements. The University of Minnesota has taken cognizance of the growth of the junior college in the state and has willingly accepted the work of standardization in so far as it may be determined by inspection and accrediting of work. To facilitate the work of standardization the university has published a pamphlet setting forth the conditions which should be met by the new institutions in order that they may be properly prepared to articulate with the work of the junior year at the university. In one way, the states of California and Minnesota are much alike. Both states are large and in both the institutions of higher learning are so located that the potential student from a large share of the state lives many miles from a higher institution other than a normal school. Dr. F. E. Bolton shows in a recent article, and many reports on individual colleges confirm the statement, that far the larger number of students attending an institution come from the immediate vicinity of the institution. Hence, if many pupils are to continue their education they need to have the institution near their homes. Dr. Bolton says:

To take the means of higher education to the people is one way of insuring its attractiveness. That people will take greater advantage of higher education the nearer it is brought to them is easy of illustration. Comparatively few receive high-school training unless the high school is practically at their doors. Relatively few go from strictly rural districts to the village high schools. The small city with the same population as a given rural area sends probably ten times as many as the country. . . . By extending the high-school curricula two years, undoubtedly there would be a great increase in the number who secure at least that much of college work. How great the increase would be is entirely unpredictable, but so great as to astonish even the boldest dreamers.

It is hardly necessary to discuss the purposes of the junior college. They are readily apparent from the advantages claimed for the institution. In an address before the National Education Association in 1917, Superintendent I. I. Cammack, of Kansas City, Missouri, gave the following as the desirable results which would grow out of a general introduction of the institution:

It will make it possible for thousands of young men and women to obtain a college education who otherwise would find it beyond their power. It will permit other thousands to get such an education without leaving home. It will reduce to a very considerable extent the expenses of education beyond the traditional high school. It will offer an incentive to the ambitious boy and girl to reach a higher

plane of preparation than is possible under the present system. It will make possible an adaptation of preparation to the local demands not now existing. It will enable the universities to confine their attention to legitimate university work. It will meet the present demand for preparation along agricultural, industrial, and commercial lines through the channels of public education without requiring the student to leave his home.

Dr. Bolton suggests that the direct articulation of the junior college and the high school should tend to avoid needless duplication of certain work both by institutions and by the students attending the institutions. He further suggests that courses would be more likely to be varied to meet the needs of those who never plan to complete the university but who do desire further education in some certain fields. He thinks that more students would continue their education in graduate schools.

The greatest gain, however, would result from carrying the student two additional years at home at a critical period. Without every possible inducement to continue study after high-school graduation, the chances are all in favor of abandoning forever the student career. The fewer the stopping places offered in school work, the greater the assurance of its continuance.

In addition to the above advantages our experience leads us to add the following: (1) The cost of living at the present time is so high as to make it far more difficult for ambitious students with limited means to "make their way" through college. (2) Because of small classes conditions are particularly favorable for giving individual attention and help when needed. (3) High-school students have opportunities of seeing some of the actual possibilities of further study. Better work results in high-school subjects in order to prepare for later college years. The leaven affects even students not intending to enter college. (4) Brighter pupils are enabled to begin some work in college before the actual completion of all work of the senior year. (5) The very fact of having an institution in the community which gives work of university standing tends to raise the cultural tone of the community.

On the other hand junior colleges suffer from certain limitations:

1. Some communities will attempt to introduce the college work when the financial situation of the school system will not justify it. This mistake may be disastrous for either of two reasons:

- a) The financial strain may be so severe as to make it necessary to take from the lower schools the revenue actually needed for their

adequate support. Many small communities now try as a matter of civic pride to maintain a four-year high school to the detriment of their entire school system. Some communities have already made this mistake with the junior college.

b) There may be ample funds for maintaining the usual grade schools and high school with a small surplus. This does not necessarily mean that a community should attempt to introduce the college. The expense of introduction and maintenance of the college is much greater per pupil than is that even of the senior year in high school. Requirements of preparation of teachers and of teaching hours for the faculty, equipment, and in fact all phases of the work force the cost element higher. At the same time, in no place in the entire school system is unsatisfactory work as much to be deplored as in the college. The college student must not be deceived into thinking he is getting something that is worth while when he is not. The college student is a conscious adult seeker after truth and a month is often more valuable than a year earlier in life. No institutions should be permitted to offer pseudo-college courses.

2. Even in communities where the wealth is sufficient to support the work adequately, the source of supply of students must be considered. There needs to be a sufficient number of students to allow for some real student activities and for the development of some real school spirit in the college, otherwise the college will be, of necessity, considered a sort of dead appendage to the live high school and as a result will fail to appeal to a large share of the students who should be profiting most from it.

3. Each college should have much of its nature determined for it by its clientele. To some extent local conditions should color the direction of certain courses that should be given, but they should never become so dominant as to cause the institution to fail to articulate with other higher institutions. Much is said about rebelling against university domination of our schools, but the school cannot afford to be so radical in rebellion as to cause its own product to suffer because of the lack of articulation.

The junior college must secure a large share of its students directly from the high school with which it is connected. Experience seems to indicate that the best organization of these upper years of the system is found when they are united with the high

school under one principal and with many of the teachers teaching in both the college and the high school. W. H. Hughes reporting on the California plan says:

A more rational plan, generally adopted by the upward extension schools in California, is the assignment of junior-college subjects to the heads of the various high-school departments who continue to teach at least a part of the time in the grades of the high school proper. This plan of faculty organization makes possible a greater variety of junior-college courses, greater efficiency in the teaching of the more advanced subjects, better understanding and co-operation between the upper and lower divisions, and a more unified system of secondary education. The principles of continuity and unity also justify the general practice in California of placing the high school and the junior college under one supervisory and administrative head. The principal is the logical head of the reorganized secondary school.¹

Professor Alexander Lange, of the University of California, has expressed virtually the same opinion.

That the junior college must make it possible for those of its students who so desire to go on through a standard university has already been mentioned. Hence it is evident that the junior college occupies the middle ground between the high school and the junior year of the university. What it accomplishes must be built on what the high school has already done and must, for a large percentage of its students, be directed by what the university courses will offer in succeeding years. At present most courses in most junior colleges must of necessity be close approximations of the courses offered in the universities. The type of students who come into a junior college and the plans they have for the future should largely determine the courses given. As yet there is little need in most cases to lament over the fact that the junior college is largely university preparatory. The students of most of our junior colleges expect to attend the university and should therefore have such courses as will enable them to do so without loss of time or credits. With the growth of appreciation of the worth of education beyond the high school that is sure to follow the establishing of the college work in the community, there will come requests for other types of work. Then is the time to begin establishing such types of work. Artificially stimulated school courses, even though they be worthy and well taught, are like hothouse plants—uncertain as to fruitage.

¹ W. H. HUGHES, "Junior College Development," *Educational Administration and Supervision*, V (1919), 194.

The junior college of Hibbing was established on the recommendation of the superintendent by the Hibbing board of education in 1916 as an actual part of the Hibbing school system. The college opened in the autumn with an enrolment of about twenty-five students. During the year 1917-18 there was an enrolment of approximately forty students. The war very greatly decreased this number during 1918-19. It has again increased until this year there are more than seventy students taking part- or full-time work. Requirements for entering as a regular student are the same as for the various courses at the University of Minnesota, although any person is permitted to enter any class for which he has requisite preparation. Graduation is granted to students who have secured sixty semester hours' credit and have made at least sixty honor points. No degree is granted but a diploma is issued. To any student not meeting the requirements for graduation a certificate covering the work done is issued. Several have graduated and are now doing satisfactory work in leading universities. The college is regularly inspected each year by committees from the University of Minnesota. Classes are limited to not more than twenty students with an attempt to keep all classes at fifteen or under. The length of recitation period is fifty-seven minutes in the clear. The length of year is forty weeks. No college credit is given for any work taken in a high-school class. Seniors who lack less than four credits of graduation from high school and whose high-school record has been excellent are permitted to take their excess work in college. At present eighteen out of eighty-five Seniors are availing themselves of this opportunity. The effect of this arrangement is noticeable even in the early years of high school as capable youngsters are making extra effort and planning their courses in order to be fitted for entering the junior college early. Incidentally, it occurs that the best students out of each graduating class thus receive a taste of actual college work and are not satisfied with graduation from high school alone. The honor students of the last three high-school classes are regular students in the junior college this year.

The college maintains the following departments: mathematics, romance languages, Latin, English, chemistry, biology, political science and economics, history, engineering, and physical training.

During this semester regular work is offered as follows: rhetoric, English survey, Latin (fifth year), French I, French II, Spanish I, Spanish II, college algebra, solid geometry, analytical geometry, trigonometry, calculus, electrical engineering I, electrical engineering II, descriptive geometry, machine drawing, general chemistry, advanced general chemistry, zoölogy, botany, modern history, English history, economics, physical and commercial geography, physical training for women, physical training for men, technology, and shop work.

All subjects enumerated above are organized on college credit bases. Any individual who has completed high school may take some of these subjects and also take subjects in high school if desired, but the high-school subjects do not give advanced college credit. There are always some students reaching across in this way. Certain of the subjects are offered as extension courses in night school under the regular college instructors. Descriptive geometry, varied courses in higher mathematics, chemistry, electrical engineering, Spanish, and French are usually so given. College credit however is seldom received for such work although some students have completed work in this manner. Liberal arts, pre-legal, pre-medical, pre-dental, engineering, and commerce courses are maintained by the college. At the present time there are students pursuing each of the above courses. Engineering has the heaviest enrolment among the men who, by the way, exceed the women in the ratio of about two to one this year.

The faculty of a junior college is one of the most important, if not the most important, feature of the organization. On the preparation of the faculty depends the value of the information which it can impart. On the ability of the instructors as instructors rests the probability of the understanding and retention of the subject-matter imparted. On the breadth of view of the instructors hangs the possibility of wise guidance in vocational and avocational choices among the students. Certain requirements must be met if these conditions are to prevail. The University of Minnesota has suggested that any instructor in a junior college should have at least a Master's degree in the field in which he or she is to instruct. It further suggests that an instructor should not attempt to teach in more than two distinct fields. Not more than three different subjects should be taught by a college instruc-

tor and the total number of hours per week should not exceed fifteen. To this list of requirements Hibbing has added that at least two years of successful teaching elsewhere should precede junior-college teaching. At present there are six men and eight women instructors who devote part- or full-time to the junior college, aside from the principal or director who is also principal of the six-year high school. Each instructor has at least a Master's degree. The institutions having granted these degrees include Syracuse, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Harvard, Chicago, Minnesota, Michigan, Iowa, and Illinois. All but four of the instructors teach part-time in college and part-time in high school. The local experience justifies this reaching across just as Hughes reports to be the case in California. Instructors who give any high-school work and also teach college work are likewise limited to fifteen or sixteen hours teaching per week. All instructors spend many hours in personal conferences with individual students. Students and faculty mingle in a mutually beneficial way as the student gets the "personal touch" with the instructor and the instructor gets personally acquainted with the student and his needs. A large study-hall and conference room give splendid opportunity for such contact. An advantage of special importance comes from the same instructor teaching both college and high-school subjects through the impetus to further study that is given to a high-school class by a college instructor. Almost every student now enrolled in junior college received the inspiration for getting a higher education from some faculty member who could give some insight into what lay ahead. Bonds of sympathy are needed to cement the two organizations which should be united into one. The ultimate goal for many high schools might well be to lead their pupils to see that graduation should come at the end of the fourteenth rather than at the end of the twelfth year. Such a goal can only be established when there is unity and coherence throughout.

In an earlier paragraph, the statement was made that there should be a sufficient number of students in a junior college to give opportunity for some distinctive college activities. In the Hibbing Junior College such activities have been established. Athletic teams are maintained and regular schedules are arranged with other schools of normal or college caliber. Literary societies and clubs and other usual college organizations contribute to the college

life. Convocations with speakers and varied programs are held once in six weeks. The Seniors of the high school are invited guests at all convocations. College teas are held monthly. Invitations to the teas are issued to various groups of people in the community from time to time. The social life of the college is on a higher plane than that of the high school and accordingly makes an appeal to the average high-school Senior. Seniors consider it an honor to be invited to participate in or to attend any college function. Such an attitude was not present until the college had shown that its activities are of real worth. Numbers are necessary if the college activities are to have real worth.

Have the advantages claimed for the junior college materialized in Hibbing? Has the attempt been worth while? Time has been too short and conditions too abnormal to permit an unqualified answer. Something, however, can be given as evidence of success. A comparison with the forecast of Superintendent Cammack is enlightening. More boys and girls are enabled to get an education than could do so otherwise. At least twenty-six students out of the number regularly enrolled in the junior college at present would not have in any way considered securing an education above high school without the opportunity offered by the junior college. At least ten others were very doubtful in the matter. The lists include the leading students of the high school for the past three years. Several students have been enabled to get their first two years here while still too young to leave home. Tuition, textbooks, laboratories, libraries, supplies, and transportation are furnished free and enable many to secure the two years' work with virtually no expense. Pupils as low as the seventh grade are heard repeatedly to say, "I'm going to go right on through the junior college and then I can make my way the last two years at the university." Is an ideal of this sort worth while in a community? The engineering work represents a variation of work to meet an insistent call from the mining interest of the community.

With Dr. Bolton we agree that "the greatest gain, however, results from carrying the student two additional years at home at a critical period," and from giving to the younger pupils an ideal of the possibilities of a higher education, especially from giving such an ideal to the brighter groups of such pupils causing them to really make an effort to get ready for what lies ahead.

What is the future of the junior college? Time alone can tell, but statistics offer evidence of what to expect. High-school population increased 500 per cent between 1890 and 1915 in the United States. Senior classes increased even more rapidly in numbers. In Hibbing, the increase in high-school enrolment has been over 100 per cent in the past four years. With senior classes nearing the century mark, the future of the Hibbing Junior College seems indeed bright. Hibbing, five or six years ago, could not point to a single high-school graduate that had completed a four-year university course. At present there are in various universities and the junior college seventy of its high-school graduates from the classes of 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919 planning to complete such courses.

Students are urged to secure a college education. No attempt is made to urge anyone to enter the local institution, but the value of college training can be impressed upon the high-school student when he sees its effects upon others about him. The raising of an attainable ideal before an ambitious boy means more than telling him to hitch his wagon to a star or that he may become president of the United States of America.

The junior college makes necessary additional funds for financing a school system. But the added revenue is willingly furnished by the community on the grounds that the junior-college graduate is a valuable asset to the community. Hibbing is proud of its junior college.

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